



Approved For Release 2007/03/08 : CIA-RDP80R01720R001300060033-2

Department of State

TELEGRAM

28 SEP 1970

18280

SECRET 511

PAGE 01 PHNOM 02527 271402Z

JJM JIR HGB PGO

EKH MEE TAW JK25

53

ACTION SS-45

PJR JES

INFO OCT-01 /046 W

D 080028

R 271250Z SEP 70

FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2058  
WHITE HOUSE

CABLE SECRETARIAT ROUTING: EXDIS,  
BACKGROUND USE ONLY: FILE CS/RE,  
DCI (orig), D/DCI, DDP, SDO, D/OCI,  
D/ONE, C/FE, SAVA, C/UR  
D/OER

SECRET PHNOM PENH 2527

EXDIS

SUBJ: VISIT OF SIR ROBERT THOMPSON TO CAMBODIA

1. SIR ROBERT THOMPSON AND DESMOND PALMER VISITED PHNOM PENH SEPTEMBER 25-26. THEY WERE RECEIVED BY LON NOL, WERE BRIEFED ON MILITARY SITUATION BY BRIGADIER GENERAL SAK SUTSAKAN, VISITED FANK TRAINING CAMP AT KOMPAL, MET WITH BRIGADIER GENERAL PEAU LIM VAR FOR REVIEW OF PLANS FOR MOBILIZATION OF POPULATION, AND HELD INDEPENDENT MEETINGS WITH BRITISH AMBASSADOR ANTHONY WILLIAMS AND AUSTRALIAN CHARGE MACK WILLIAMS. IN RELATIVELY BRIEF TIME OFFERED I THINK THEY HAD ENOUGH EXPOSURE TO FORM SOME IMPRESSIONS WORTH HEEDING, AND THEY WILL COMMUNICATE THESE DIRECTLY TO WHITE HOUSE ON THEIR RETURN. THIS IS BY WAY OF AN INTERIM REPORT.

2. CONVERSATION WITH LON NOL TOOK A NOT ESPECIALLY INFORMATIVE PATH DESPITE OUR EFFORTS TO FOCUS IT ON SIR ROBERT'S INTERESTS. HE RECEIVED SIR ROBERT, PALMER, LADD, AND ME PRIVATELY AND SPOKE ENTIRE TIME IN CAMBODIAN WITH INTERPRETER INTO ENGLISH OF INDIFFERENT QUALITY. HE SPOKE OF HIS GRATITUDE FOR AMERICAN ASSISTANCE, HIS ANNOYANCE THAT RELATIONS WITH THAI (FISHING VIOLATIONS IN CAMBODIAN WATERS) AND WITH SOUTH VIETNAMESE (MILITARY ACTIONS ON CAMBODIAN TERRITORY WITHOUT CONSULTATION) ARE TROUBLED ALTHOUGH IMPROVING, AND HIS CONCERN ABOUT EFFORTS OF "VIET-CONG TRAINED KHMER" TO PROSELYTIZE THE COUNTRYSIDE. WITH IT ALL, HOWEVER, HE IMBUE CONVERSATION WITH CHARACTERISTIC CONFIDENCE THAT

State Dept. review completed

NOT TO BE REPRODUCED WITHOUT THE AUTHORIZATION OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY  
Approved For Release 2007/03/08 : CIA-RDP80R01720R001300060033-2

SECRET



Approved For Release 2007/03/08 : CIA-RDP80R01720R601300060033-2

Department of State

TELEGRAM

SECRET

PAGE 02 PHNOM 02527 271402Z

CAMBODIANS WILL BE VICTORIOUS COME WHAT MAY, AND HE REFERRED TWICZNT0 FACT HE IS WAGING A PEOPLE'S WAR (HE USED FRENCH PHRASE "GUERRE POPULAIRE"). AS WE LEFT, HE TOLD ME HE WAS SOMEWHAT FATIGUED FROM TRIP NORTH TO VISIT TROOPS ON ROUTE SIX, AND I SUSPECT THAT COMBAT LOSSES INVOLVED IN THAT OPERATION, HOWEVER POSITIVE THE OTHER RETURNS, HAVE WEIGHED HEAVILY ON HIM. BUT THEY HAVE NOT DIMINISHED HIS CONFIDENCE IN HIS CAUSE.

3. THIS SENSE OF CAMBODIA'S CONFIDENCE IN ULTIMATE VICTORY AND JUSTICE OF ITS CAUSE IS I BELIEVE THE DOMINANT IMPRESSION WHICH, AFTER FURTHER BRIEFINGS, CONVERSATIONS, AND VISITS, SIR ROBERT TOOK AWAY WITH HIM. HE SAID THAT HE WAS GREATLY ENCOURAGED, IN PARTICULAR IN COMPARISON WITH VIETNAM, BY PATRIOTISM EVIDENCED ON ALL SIDES AND BY PREVAILING PHILOSOPHY OF CAMBODIANS TO DEFEND THEMSELVES AND TO PLOT THEIR OWN COURSES OF ACTION WITH MINIMUM OF EXTERNAL ASSISTANCE. HE SAID A DOLLAR SPENT IN CAMBODIA SHOULD GO MORE THAN TWICE AS FAR AS ONE IN VIETNAM, AND HE SAID HE WOULD URGE CONTINUATION OF A PROGRAM DESIGNED AS A PRESENT TO HELP CAMBODIANS DEFEND THEMSELVES WITHOUT INUNDATING THEM IN SOPHISTICATED EQUIPMENT OR CULTIVATING IN THEM AN UNDUE SENSE OF DEPENDENCE. HE TOLD LADD HE IS IMPRESSED BY EXTENT TO WHICH THIS HAS BECOME A PEOPLE'S WAR. HE BELIEVES, AS DO I, THAT WE MUST PROVIDE ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE WITH AS MUCH MULTILATERAL COLORATION AS POSSIBLE AND AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. HE SAID THAT ON HIS RETURN TO LONDON HE WOULD RECOMMEND THAT HMG EXTEND ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO CAMBODIA, NOT AS SOME ECONOMICALLY JUSTIFIED EXPENDITURE BUT AS A POLITICAL GESTURE TO A COUNTRY WHICH IS DEFENDING ITSELF VALIANTLY AGAINST AN AGGRESSOR.

4. WEIGHING AGAINST ANY OPTIMISM ABOUT THE FUTURE THERE ARE NUMEROUS NEGATIVE FACTORS: VC/NVA DISCIPLINE AND DEDICATION; VULNERABILITY OF ECONOMY AND COMMUNICATION ROUTES TO HARASSMENT; SUSCEPTIBILITY OF URBAN CENTERS TO ILLS OF INFLATION AND WAR WEARINESS AND ENDEMIC BUREAUCRATIC INEFFICIENCY. BUT AFTER BRIEF EXPOSURE I FULLY SHARE SIR ROBERT'S APPRAISAL THAT THE FIGHTING SPIRIT AND RESOLUTION OF THIS GOVERNMENT AND ITS SUPPORTERS ARE IMPORTANT FAVORABLE FACTORS IN THE EQUATION.

SWANK